

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 ALGIER 00836 031651Z

47/43

ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2200

S E C R E T ALGIERS 0836

EXDIS

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (MRN - 0836 VICE 0837)

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, XC, AF

SUBJ: BOUMEDIENE ON INDOCHINA

1. AT END APRIL 1 CONVERSATION REPORTED SEPARATELY, BOUMEDIENE ASKED ABOUT SITUATION IN CAMBODIA AND VIETNAM. I SAID THESE DIFFICULT DAYS FOR US PRESS WAS SPECULATING THAT LON NOL'S DEPARTURE MIGHT FACILITATE PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT, BUT KHMER ROUGE DID NOT SEEM BE INTERESTED AND SIHANOUK'S POSITION AND CAPABILITIES UNCLEAR. BOUMEDIENE SAID THERE NO QUESTION THAT SIHANOUK'S POSITION HAD BEEN WEAKENED, BUT HE WAS STILL FACTOR ON THE SCENE AND KHMER ROUGE COULD NOT DISPENSE WITH HIM.

2. ON VIETNAM HE SAID HE HAD IMPRESSION WE STILL THINKING IN COLD WAR TERMS. I SAID QUESTIONS OF MORAL COMMITMENTS AND HUMANITY MORE IMPORTANT AT THIS MOMENT THAN COMMUNIST AND ANTI-COMMUNIST. WE HAD SUPPORTED VIETNAMESE IN VALIANT FIGHT, AND DID NOT WANT TO LET THEM DOWN AT A DIFFICULT MOMENT. FOR US IT WAS QUESTION OF HONOR, WHICH I WAS SURE HE WOULD UNDERSTAND. HE NODDED TO INDICATE THAT HE DID AND SAID HE GLAD THAT VIETNAM WAS NOT HIS PROBLEM.

3. ON WAY OUT HE SAID THAT PRG FOREIGN MINISTER, MME BINH, NOW IN ALGIERS. I ASKED WHAT SHE HAD TO SAY. HE LOOKED

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SURPRISED AND THEN SAID, "SHE CRITICIZED AMERICAN POLICY"

(SHE HAS BEEN GIVEN GOOD DEAL OF TV TIME IN WHICH TO DO
SO, AND IS HOLDING PRESS CONFERENCE THIS MORNING).

4. COMMENT: REPORT ABOVE AS OF POSSIBLE INTEREST.
BOUMEDIENE SEEMED SYMPATHETIC TO OUR PROBLEMS IN
INDOCHINA, BUT HIS PRESS HAS BEEN 150 PER CENT ON
SIDE NORTH VIETNAMESE AND PRG.PARKER

SECRET

NNN

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